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Chairman: Mr. Belinga-Eboutou ..... (Cameroon)
later: Mr. Maertens (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Belgium)

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* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 108: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/58/31, A/58/87-E/2003/82, A/58/125, A/58/131-S/2003/703, A/58/165, 222 and 223; A/C.3/58/L.3-L.6)

Agenda item 109: International drug control (*continued*) (A/58/31, A/58/124, A/58/131-S/2003/703 and A/58/253)

1. **Mr. MacKay** (New Zealand), speaking in New Zealand's capacity as Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum and on behalf of the Forum States members of the United Nations, Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and also New Zealand, said the countries of the region were vulnerable to exploitation by criminal syndicates undertaking illegal activities. Additionally, the use of small arms in the region, even though numbers were small, could potentially have a disproportionate effect on economic livelihoods and political stability. In 2002, Fiji, during its chairmanship of the Forum, had informed the Committee of the efforts the countries of the region were making to tackle transnational organized crime, illicit drug trafficking, trade in small arms, people smuggling, identity fraud and the illegal trade in wildlife. Those efforts were summarized in the Nasonini Declaration on Regional Security, which underscored the intent of countries in the Pacific to act collectively in response to security challenges, including the adverse effects of globalization such as transnational crime and unlawful challenges to national integrity and independence.

2. The Nasonini Declaration underlined the commitment of Forum member States to combat terrorism and to implement internationally agreed anti-terrorism measures. Good progress had been made towards fulfilling the intent of the declaration. An expert working group of Forum members was coordinating the development of a regional framework to address terrorism and transnational organized crime. Model legislative provisions were being prepared for the region with a view to implementing international anti-terrorism treaties, Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto. Those model provisions were comprehensive and dealt with not only terrorism offences under the 12 conventions and a regime for freezing funds as required under resolution 1373 (2001), but also offences relating to participation in organized criminal groups and in people smuggling and trafficking. They supplemented model provisions devised in previous years on money-laundering, mutual assistance, forfeiture of the proceeds of crime and extradition. To give effect to those provisions, a team of legal experts would assist Forum members within the next two months with adapting the model laws to the specific needs of each country.

3. At their meeting in Auckland in 2003, the leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum had endorsed the Nadi Framework of principles for model legislation on weapons control and had encouraged members to adopt the legislation to the fullest extent possible. The Framework was based on the principle that the possession and use of firearms, ammunition, related materials and prohibited weapons was a privilege that was conditional on the overriding need to ensure public safety. The model legislation would therefore impose strict controls on the importation, possession and use of firearms, ammunition and prohibited weapons. If uniformly adopted, the legislation would both improve public safety and provide a common regional deterrent to small-arms traffickers. In that context, he said that Japan and Australia had co-hosted in Tokyo a regional workshop to enhance cooperation on legal and institutional issues, the practical enforcement of laws and effective stockpile management and safekeeping. At the 2003 Forum meeting, Forum leaders had agreed to explore the viability of extending the Identity Fraud Register project to Forum countries.

4. The work being done to improve the region's legislative capability to counter transnational crime was complemented by the Forum's decision in 2003 to support an Australian Pacific Regional Policing initiative which would focus on training and capacity-building in the areas of basic policing skills, forensic and crime-scene investigation, executive development and support for initiatives proposed by the South Pacific Chiefs of police conference. Based in Fiji, the initiative would use a "train-the-trainers" approach to ensure the sustainability of the programme. In July 2003, in response to a request from the Solomon Islands Government, the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands had been established. The mission, comprising police supported by military personnel, had

already made excellent progress in restoring law and order and implementing programmes to strengthen the Solomon Islands' justice system and economic agencies. The mission included personnel from Australia, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Vanuatu. The mission acted at all times in accordance with Solomon Islands law as it reinforced Solomon Islands sovereignty. Close cooperation with Solomon Islands public-sector agencies, community organizations and the people of Solomon Islands was the hallmark of that operation. Lastly, he welcomed the recent successful conclusion of negotiations on the United Nations Convention against Corruption, an issue which must be tackled by a range of measures, including effective criminal laws.

5. **Mr. Messing** (Israel) said that the problem of illegal drugs affected the whole world without exception. Many years ago, Israel had drawn attention to the close correlation between drug trafficking and the universal problem of terrorism. Although the issue was characteristic of the Mediterranean region, it was by no means exclusive to the Middle East. It was also evident that corruption could endanger the stability and security of societies and could undermine the values of democracy, morality and the rule of law. Israel confirmed that it shared the international concern regarding t' threat posed by illicit drugs, as well as the global conviction that the phenomenon must be combated. Israel was party to numerous international conventions on the matter and to the Political Declaration adopted in 1998 by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session on the world drug problem. Israel fully supported the United Nations drug-control agencies.

6. Israel had translated its conviction into domestic action. The Israel Anti-Drug Authority was a statutory corporation empowered by law to coordinate efforts to combat drug abuse and trafficking. Since its establishment in 1988, the corporation had gained significant expertise in the fields of prevention, education, public awareness, treatment and rehabilitation, community development, manpower training, research and law enforcement, all of which were aimed at reducing both the supply of and demand for illegal drugs. In 1991, the Knesset had passed a forfeiture law empowering the authorities to seize assets acquired from drug trafficking. As part of its Criminal Code, Israel had also introduced a law on the laundering of funds resulting from illegal activities. The Israel National Police and the Customs Drug Unit had invested tremendous efforts and resources in controlling airports and seaports, as well as land-border crossings. Their work with other police forces around the world had resulted in fruitful cooperation, especially in the field of complex drug offences.

7. International cooperation was a vital factor in combating transnational organized crime and drug trafficking; it was only through subregional, regional and global cooperation that the scourge could be stopped. Efforts to control such evils had become all the more imperative, as it had been proven that revenues from drug sales were being used to finance terrorism, which constituted an indisputable threat to the life and dignity of human beings. There was no need to expound upon the dangerous link between drugs and terrorism in the Middle East. The Hezbollah, an extremist Islamic terrorist organization operating out of Lebanon, was a world leader in the cultivation and trafficking of drugs for the purpose of financing terrorist activity. From its position along the Lebanese side of the border with Israel, the Hezbollah directed drug trafficking and smuggling operations to the Israeli side. Profits from those operations had been used to finance the purchase of firearms and explosives, which were then smuggled to terrorist organizations in the Palestinian Authority territories. Terrorism not only imperilled innocent life and personal security, but posed a grave and genuine threat to global peace and security, as had occurred in the Middle East.

8. Owing to the attacks of 11 September 2001 against the United States, it was incumbent upon the international community to be more resolute than ever in the fight against terrorism. Consequently, Israel supported the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Secretariat of the United Nations Office at Vienna. Israel would like to see more efforts invested in such work, especially regarding the identification and increased awareness of links between terrorism and related crimes, such as illicit drug trafficking. Israel was therefore expanding its cooperation with other countries and international organizations and would continue to support international efforts, including bilateral and regional cooperation. Israel would also continue to seek new channels for the exchange of information, such as

international conventions and additional agreements with other countries and organizations.

9. **Mr. Cho** Seong-jun (Republic of Korea) said that his country strongly supported the fight against corruption and welcomed the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, which would play a major role in achieving the goal of a crime-free world. In May 2003, Seoul had hosted the 11th International Anti-Corruption Conference and the Third Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity, which had been attended by delegations from 129 countries and 11 international organizations. The Conference had examined every aspect of corruption-related matters and the Forum had adopted a final declaration expressing the participants' solidarity and support for the anti-corruption efforts undertaken within the framework of the United Nations. The Republic of Korea would actively participate in those efforts.

10. The Government of the Republic of Korea was working to ratify the conventions and protocols relating to the responsibility of States to combat terrorism. In 2003, it had ratified the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf. It was also on the point of completing the necessary national legislation to implement the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The Government expected to become a party to all 12 international legal instruments against terrorism by the end of 2003.

11. Human trafficking was another alarming concern, as hundreds of thousands of persons were being trafficked across national borders for sexual and labour exploitation every year. Furthermore, trafficking was often linked to other international organized crimes such as document fraud, money-laundering and migrant smuggling. The problem could be solved only through joint efforts at the national, regional and international levels. The Republic of Korea was firmly resolved to combat human trafficking and would continue to strengthen its commitment to regional and international efforts. In 2001, the Government had established an Inter-Agency Task Force on Trafficking in Persons, which was playing a major role in the efforts to prevent human trafficking, punish traffickers and protect victims.

12. At the regional level, his Government remained strongly committed to the Bali process, which was the Asia-Pacific region's framework to combat the smuggling of and trafficking in persons. The Ministry of Gender Equality, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, principal members of the Inter-Agency Task Force, had recently hosted an expert group meeting on the prevention of international trafficking and the promotion of public-awareness campaigns in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), to explore further ways to combat crimes related to trafficking in persons.

13. As for international drug control, the concern expressed during the forty-sixth ministerial segment of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs must be translated into concrete action at all levels, particularly law enforcement, public awareness-raising, treatment of the addicted, and alternative development. Although the Republic of Korea was relatively less affected by drug problems, it was endeavouring to stamp them out. The Government had tasked its Inter-Agency Anti-Drug Committee with coordinating policies among the 13 authorities concerned since 1999. It was launching an inter-agency information system on drug problems, which would enable agencies to engage in real-time exchanges of information. The Government had also implemented an advertising campaign to prevent drug abuse; it was using Web pages, magazine advertisements and street signs to transmit preventive messages to vulnerable groups, particularly youth. Its efforts included a nationwide 24 hour hotline on drug problems and an Internet consultation centre for youth.

14. His Government was ready to share those experiences with neighbouring countries and to enhance international cooperation to counter the increasingly serious problem of drugs, including the threat posed by amphetamine-type stimulants. To that end, his Government annually hosted an anti-drug liaison officials' meeting for international cooperation (ADLOMICO). The current year's meeting had been held in Jeju Island and had involved delegations from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Interpol, the World Customs Organization (WCO) and delegations from 18 countries. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime was at the centre of international mechanisms to combat crime, and his Government welcomed the efforts by the Director-

General of the Office to streamline the organization in order to strengthen its efficiency and effectiveness.

15. **Mr. Tekin** (Turkey) said that the extent, intensity and complexity of organized criminal activities all over the world threatened the security as well as the democratic, social and economic development of many countries. Transnational criminal groups had taken advantage of globalization to further expand their activities; international cooperation and coordination were increasingly important in dealing with them. His Government hoped that the recent entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which Turkey had ratified together with its two additional protocols, would give new momentum to those efforts.

16. The phenomenon of corruption had also grown in recent years, and the need to combat it had become more pressing than ever owing to its damaging effects on national economies, democratic institutions and the rule of law. Given the increasingly transnational nature of corruption, the recent conclusion of the negotiation process to establish the United Nations Convention against Corruption had been very timely. The speed with which agreement had been reached on the text of the Convention, the first universal legal instrument on the subject, reflected the determination of the international community to fight corruption. His Government, which had taken an active part in the process, looked forward to the speedy entry into force of the Convention.

17. Another feature of organized crime was the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in humans, which were increasing throughout the world at an alarming rate. Turkey, located at the crossroads of Asia, the Middle East and Europe, had 5,000 miles of coastline and had become a country of destination for human trafficking in recent years. His Government was determined to combat that scourge. The adoption of all relevant international instruments, including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and their incorporation into domestic legislation indicated his Government's political will. Furthermore, a task force had been established and had produced a national action plan to combat trafficking in human beings. Those legal and administrative measures were complemented by increased cooperation with civil society to raise awareness of that important issue.

18. Drug abuse was a phenomenon affecting almost all countries and some 200 million people, almost 5 per cent of the world population aged over 14. Drug trafficking was an illicit activity which produced the greatest profits, some US$ 400 billion per year according to United Nations reports. The increase in trafficking and abuse of synthetic drugs was another worrying development. According to the first-ever United Nations global survey on Ecstasy and amphetamines, seizures over the past decade had risen tenfold and abuse was spreading at an alarming rate. The availability of those drugs and the fact that they were easily produced and concealed was even more worrisome because many people condoned their abuse, thus increasing their acceptability.

19. The damaging effects of illicit drug production on political stability, economic development and the rule of law must not be overlooked. The example of Afghanistan showed how illicit drug trafficking could destabilize a country. Moreover, drug trafficking remained one of the main sources of financing for terrorist groups. Turkey had been drawing attention to that connection for years, and was pleased to see that the connection was increasingly acknowledged by the international community, since only through strong and effective international cooperation could that menace be countered. In that regard, his Government fully supported the strengthening of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Centre for International Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and welcomed the launch of the Global Programme against Terrorism. That Programme, together with the Counter-Terrorism Committee established by the Security Council, was making invaluable contributions to the efforts of Member States in the fight against terrorism.

20. To deal with the threats posed by drug abuse and drug trafficking, a comprehensive, balanced and coordinated national and international response was needed. The resolve and efforts of the international community were required in order to improve national capabilities, develop regional partnerships and tackle all aspects of the problem. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime should continue to play a central role in coordinating those efforts. Turkey had strengthened its cooperation and partnership with the Office through a range of technical activities to prevent drug abuse in the country, strengthen its national drug-control capacities and expertise, increase cooperation against organized crime and terrorism and promote

training of law-enforcement officials from the countries of the region. The Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organized Crime, created with the support of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, had become a recognized centre for training law-enforcement officials from the countries of the region. Lastly, his Government remained committed to supporting all efforts towards enhancing international collaboration in combating organized crime and illicit drug trafficking in order to achieve the shared goal of eradicating those scourges.

21. **Mr. Kishor Singh** (Nepal) said that transnational organized crime, drug trafficking, terrorism, corruption and money-laundering poisoned relations between States and posed a threat to international peace and security. Those crimes fed one another and had caused massive loss of life and property. Nepal expressed its deep condolences to all the innocent victims who had sacrificed their lives in different parts of the world in the service of peace and humanity. The international community must revamp its efforts to defeat those menaces, which had expanded their reach and networks through the globalization process. Nepal was fully committed to joining forces with other States in achieving that objective.

22. Terrorism was the worst form of crime. Nepal noted with satisfaction the international instruments in place to combat that crime, such as Security Council resolutions and United Nations conventions. However, terrorism continued to destroy life and property throughout the world, and the United Nations and the international community therefore needed to redouble their efforts to combat it. In that respect, Nepal supported the measures adopted by the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which had been complemented by the work of the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee.

23. Trafficking in persons was inhumane and human development was a strong deterrent against that crime. Nepal noted with satisfaction the discussions held by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice concerning trafficking in human beings, especially women and children, and the Economic and Social Council's subsequent adoption of a resolution on that issue. It called on the international community to provide adequate resources to strengthen international cooperation in preventing and combating trafficking in persons and protecting victims of such trafficking. Nepal was a party to the Convention on the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others and its final Protocol, and had taken the necessary legislative and other measures to prevent such crimes. Nepal had also signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and noted with satisfaction its entry into force in September 2003.

24. Nepal welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund and urged the international community to contribute sufficient resources in order to provide technical assistance to developing countries and thereby enhance their national capacity for implementing international legal instruments. Developing infrastructure, training personnel and improving the operational capacity of the criminal-justice system should constitute the core of such assistance. Moreover, Nepal encouraged the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to step up cooperation with the relevant regional and international organizations, such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which had adopted the Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.

25. Nepal endorsed the issues selected by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for discussion at the preparatory meetings of the Eleventh Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, welcomed the finalization of the date and agenda of the Congress and asked the Secretary-General to provide financial assistance to the least developed countries so that they would be able to participate in those meetings. Nepal also welcomed the work of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Negotiation of the Convention against Corruption, as well as Mexico's offer to host a high-level political conference for the signing of the Convention, and hoped that the conference would provide an opportunity to discuss its follow-up and implementation. The international community should support national efforts to prevent corruption, bribery, money-laundering and the transfer of illicit funds, and to return such funds to the countries of origin.

26. The problem of drugs was a serious global threat to public health and to the safety and well-being of humankind, in particular children and young people. Nepal was a party to international drug-control treaties and emphasized the importance of demand reduction, supply control and prevention and treatment in tackling the problem. Strict law enforcement must be

accompanied by measures to provide poor farmers with alternative ways of making a living and to treat, rehabilitate and educate victims of drug addiction. Nepal was also a party to the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and urged the international community to provide financial and technical assistance to support national efforts in the fight against illicit substances.

27. No society would be spared from social evils such as organized crime, drug trafficking, corruption, money-laundering and trafficking in human beings, or from their many adverse effects. Nepal, which had suffered the consequences of terror at the hands of the self-proclaimed Maoists, was aware of the tremendous value of international cooperation and urged the international community to join forces in defeating those evils.

28. **Mr. Lafiaji** (Nigeria) said that crime and drugs remained a serious threat to the peace and security of the international community. The ruthlessness and doggedness of the perpetrators of those crimes obliged the whole world to act with urgency. To deal with those threats, there was a need for political will and commitment, international cooperation, financial resources and effective legal instruments. Nigeria therefore welcomed the entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and strongly supported the preparations for the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the signing of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

29. Despite the negative perceptions and stigmatization it had suffered on the part of some of its foreign partners, Nigeria maintained its commitment to fighting crime and drugs, as demonstrated by the work of its National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), set up in 1989, and by the cooperation that body enjoyed, and the encouragement it received, from other law enforcement departments and from the Government. As at August 2003, the NDLEA had seized 329,472.39 kilograms of drugs, destroyed 313,155 kilograms of cannabis and convicted 251 drug traffickers. Those successes were attributable to improved investigation techniques and international cooperation, particularly at the subregional level. Conscious of the fact that drug-related crimes did not respect borders, Nigeria — in cooperation with international partners — had launched the West African Joint Operations (WAJO) initiative, which had successfully carried out a multinational drug interdiction operation in the countries of the West African subregion.

30. Drug control would not be effective unless related problems were tackled, namely money-laundering, corruption and the demand for drugs. To prevent money-laundering, Nigeria had not only strengthened the financial and investigative capacities of the NDLEA; it had also taken other steps, such as the creation of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission; the expansion of the scope of money-laundering legislation in line with the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering; and the intensification of banking inspections and prosecution of financial institutions involved in criminal activities. To reduce the demand for drugs, his country had intensified its efforts in the following areas: organization of anti-drug public-education campaigns; establishment of committees against drug abuse throughout the country at the local-government level; incorporation of drug-abuse education in school curricula; establishment of "drug-free clubs" in universities; and development of standard common operating procedures for treatment and rehabilitation services. To fight corruption, his Government had initiated the following measures: the empowerment and strengthening of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission; the investigation of past military Governments, which had resulted in the recovery of large amounts of stolen money; the overhaul of the legislature to increase accountability and improve working methods; and the strengthening of the judiciary to safeguard its independence and enhance its capacity to render justice expeditiously.

31. Nigeria appreciated the assistance and cooperation of its subregional neighbours, the international community and foreign partners, especially the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for the support it had provided in the conversion of the NDLEA Academy to a regional law-enforcement training institution to meet the needs of the West African subregion. However, Nigeria regretted the reluctance of some of its foreign partners to return large amounts of money and property stolen from the country. The fight against crime should not be selective, and just as those who committed terrorist acts or crimes against humanity should find no hiding place, those who mismanaged and stole a country's scarce resources should be denied safe haven.

32. **Mr. Tesch** (Australia) said that people smugglers and traffickers, like all transnational criminals, respected neither borders nor State sovereignty nor international laws. They paid no heed to their victims' human rights or safety. Accordingly, people smuggling and trafficking had become major political and security issues that inflicted heavy social and economic costs upon States. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), people smuggling and trafficking generated approximately US$10 billion annually, making those repugnant activities a core business for transnational criminal networks on a par with drugs, document fraud, money-laundering and arms-trafficking. Furthermore, the illegal movement of people undermined the capacity, effectiveness and integrity of the international refugee-protection system and could erode public support for legal-migration programmes that were beneficial to many countries.

33. Australia was concerned that the Asia-Pacific region remained a focal point for global people smuggling and trafficking. It was therefore doing its utmost to fight such crimes through concerted domestic, bilateral, regional and international activities. Australia had successfully pursued the extradition of people smugglers. It supported the initiatives of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to address secondary movements of refugees from countries of first asylum and encouraged the international community to provide support to such countries.

34. The Australian Government had shown its increased commitment to combat people trafficking by allocating more than A$20 million over four years to finance a package of strong, well-considered and determined new measures to combat that growing form of transnational organized crime. Such measures would significantly enhance the detection, investigation and prosecution of traffickers, improve the range of support available to victims and prevent trafficking and sexual exploitation of individuals. The measures would complement existing efforts, which included Australian aid programmes valued at about A$14 million, a new Australian Federal Police mobile strike team composed of 23 members tasked with investigating trafficking and sexual servitude, and a new reintegration-assistance project for victims of trafficking who were returned to their countries of origin in South-East Asia. Australia intended to ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, once all domestic requirements were in place.

35. Cooperation in the fight against people smuggling and trafficking in the region had continued to gain momentum at the Regional Ministerial Conference on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, held at Bali, Indonesia, in April 2003. The countries participating in the Bali process had agreed on a programme of practical activities designed to increase cooperation in such areas as information exchange, border control, public awareness, legislation, return of illegal migrants, refugee protection and the fight against trafficking in persons. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Australia and Indonesia, Co-Chairs of the Conference, had informed the Secretary-General of those results. The Bali process was making an effective and important regional contribution to international efforts to control the illegal movement of people.

36. However, the problem was far from being resolved. Greater funding was urgently needed, as well as a coordinated international response involving countries of origin, countries of first asylum, and transit and destination countries. IOM had launched a global appeal, on 19 September 2003 in Geneva, for funding to support the ongoing work of the Bali process. Australia considered people smuggling and trafficking to be international problems threatening global security and stability, which should be accorded greater international priority. It encouraged all States to consider making an appropriate contribution to the appeal, whether financial or in kind. Continuing cooperation, at the regional level and through the United Nations, was the best strategy for successfully combating people smuggling and trafficking.

37. **Mr. Abdul Rahman** (Malaysia), referring to the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), said it was alarming that organized crime had not only expanded, but had become more sophisticated as modern technology was increasingly used to perpetrate criminal activities such as money-laundering, fraud and human trafficking. Also, it was interesting to learn from the research conducted by UNODC that a clear link existed between the failure of some countries to achieve sustainable development and the growth of organized crime. Although the relationship between the socio-economic situation and crime had long been established, the revelation by UNODC further

vindicated the call for more efforts to be made to improve the socio-economic conditions of the developing countries. It was also interesting to note that while the consequences of organized crime were increasingly felt in the developing countries, it was the world financial centres that reaped the benefits. The countries hosting those financial centres surely bore the responsibility for ensuring that the proceeds of illegal activities did not contribute to their national wealth. Accordingly, they should increase and strengthen the existing procedures and regulations to prevent their banks and financial institutions from becoming safe havens for the proceeds of criminal acts.

38. On the same wavelength as the conclusions of UNODC, Malaysia had long insisted on the strong correlation between economic development and crime. Crimes were perpetrated either as acts of desperation or by criminals taking advantage of the poor. It was also known where the gains from those criminal activities would eventually find safe haven. What was surprising, however, was that after so many years of international cooperation and the establishment of so many instruments and institutions to combat organized crime, the statistics on organized crime, instead of declining, had been on the increase. His delegation believed that the international community would have to take more concerted action to combat transnational organized crime, especially in dealing with criminals using sophisticated new technology. In that connection, he supported the Secretary-General's recommendation for adequate resources to be provided to the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, particularly in activities to promote international cooperation and to provide technical services for States to meet the challenges posed by transnational organized crime, human trafficking, corruption and international terrorism. His delegation also reiterated its call to developed countries to consider seriously meeting the collective commitments pledged at various international summits and conferences, such as in the Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, to create a conducive international environment that would help to facilitate economic development in developing countries and hence raise the standard of living of the poor. Eradication of poverty was one of the most effective means of protecting people and reducing their chances of being exploited by perpetrators of transnational and organized crime. His delegation called for renewed efforts among States, particularly neighbouring States, to intensify their existing cooperation, including the exchange of information among the related national agencies, to combat transnational crime.

39. The fight against transnational organized crime demanded effective and coordinated international action within the ambit of internationally accepted laws and conventions. In that regard, the United Nations was the best forum to take the lead in coordinating such action. Organized crime and terrorism, like any other criminal activities, were dependent on finance, and there was increasing evidence that terrorist organizations had been involved in money-laundering, illicit drugs and arms trafficking to raise, transfer and conceal the funds used to support their activities. The global effort to combat the financing of terrorism and organized crime continued to face many challenges, stemming from the complexities of financial transactions and the different applications of regulatory and control measures. Much more needed to be done to promote cooperation among States to ensure that the terrorists would be deprived of any safe haven for the funds used to finance their evil activities.

40. Illicit drugs continued to pose a serious challenge to many countries and remained a serious global problem which no country could eradicate on its own. Efforts to combat the drugs menace had to be addressed at the multilateral, regional, bilateral and national levels. Strong international support and cooperation were vital in the efforts of national Governments to combat the problem. As part of the South-East Asian region, Malaysia was heartened by the positive developments reported by the UNODC Executive Director on the situation in the Golden Triangle, where encouraging trends pointed towards the total eradication of opium cultivation. That success could be largely attributed to the close international cooperation and firm action by members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in dealing with the issue of drugs in the region. Nonetheless, his delegation was concerned with the increasing threat of synthetic drugs, such as Ecstasy and amphetamine-type stimulants. Serious attention had to be given to curbing the manufacture, distribution and use of synthetic drugs, as their abuse was spreading regardless of age, gender or income. Such drugs could be produced in any country and in any laboratory at very low cost. In an effort to intensify

enforcement, ASEAN and UNDCP had signed a Memorandum of Understanding on precursor control.

41. His Government viewed the drug problem as a major threat to national security. Apart from having to introduce preventive measures to curb smuggling of drugs into the country, his Government was faced with the additional burden of preventing Malaysia from being used by international traffickers as a transit country for drugs bound mainly for markets in Europe. Malaysia's strong commitment in joining the international community to combat drug abuse and trafficking was well known. The country was involved many bilateral, regional and international efforts in that area. Upon its request, the International Narcotics Control Board had also included Malaysia in the pre-export notification system under the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. That was in line with efforts to amend national laws to impose tougher penalties in relation to precursor chemicals. His Government called for more stringent controls worldwide on precursor chemicals, and encouraged more countries to provide pre-export notification to importing countries, to assist in the control and monitoring of those chemicals.

42. Malaysia welcomed the conclusion of negotiations on the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which was an important international instrument that could contribute to the efforts to prevent and eliminate corruption. Nonetheless, the most essential ingredient in achieving effective prevention and enforcement was the political will of Member States. At the national level, Malaysia had consistently made efforts to create awareness among the population of the seriousness of problems posed by corruption, which endangered the stability and security of the country, undermined the values of democracy and jeopardized social, economic and political development. His delegation paid a solemn tribute to the late Ambassador Hector Charry Samper, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Negotiation of a Convention against Corruption, who had passed away recently, for the sterling work he had done.

43. **Ms. Tomič** (Slovenia) said that Slovenia associated itself with the statement delivered by Italy on behalf of the European Union and the acceding States. The global problem of drugs had also affected her country, which had suffered an epidemic of drug abuse in the early 1990s. Since 1992, a progressive national programme had been carrying out activities to combat that scourge. The comprehensive, global and multidisciplinary approach had proved to be a good model for reducing the harmful effects of the epidemic. Unlike many other countries, Slovenia had not yet seen a substantial rise in the levels of HIV/AIDS infection among the growing population of injection drug users and their sexual partners. Her country's experience indicated that the most important activities in relation to risk groups were drug-demand reduction through prevention programmes, health-care programmes, the social rehabilitation of drug users and harm-reduction programmes. Successful needle-exchange and drug-user counselling programmes had been developed. At the national level, the Governmental Office against Drugs had played a key role as a body responsible for coordinating various activities relating to illegal drugs. Furthermore, over the past decade, her Government had established partnership relations with non-governmental organizations. They had been particularly quick in addressing the drug epidemics of the 1990s and had since then been developing interactive and volunteer-based activities.

44. At the local level, local action groups formed part of a comprehensive strategy for combating drugs which included the systematic implementation of programmes for the reduction of drug demand in local communities. Considerable fieldwork had been done among the drug-using population and the public health system had developed a model for resolving the issue of drugs through a network of centres for the prevention and cessation of drug dependence, which also included Methadone treatment. That model was of vital importance, in particular for street children and youth. Social programmes, such as the provision of shelter, food and clothing, helped to remove drug users from the streets and prevent them from committing crimes to secure money for drugs, thus reducing the secondary crime rate. Slovenia's system for the execution of criminal sentences provided for the treatment of drug addicts in prisons, including the administration of Methadone. The dual goal of the overall drug prevention and reduction programme was to reduce the number of drug users and include active drug users in various programmes as soon as possible, making it possible for individuals to move from one programme to the other, as needed.

45. In addition to the activities implemented with the European Union, there was also fruitful cooperation

with the early warning system of the Lisbon-based European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction for the early detection of synthetic drugs and the adoption of appropriate measures. At the regional level, Slovenia was affected by the "Balkan Route" along which the illegal trafficking in drugs between South-Eastern Europe and Western Europe was conducted, with its corollary of corruption, crime and money-laundering. Since all the countries affected by drug trafficking were facing the same problems of crime and public health, it was not sufficient to take measures at the national level. Mobilization on the part of the international community was also required, while aid and cooperation arrangements needed to be enhanced and public commitments to combat that scourge must be renewed. For the purpose of creating a common system for combating drug abuse in the region of the Balkan Route, Slovenia was ready to exchange practical and theoretical ideas and information about fundamental issues concerning national legislative and institutional frameworks for combating narcotic drug abuse. That was also one of the main purposes of the regional conference that would be jointly organized by Slovenia and Croatia in Dubrovnik later in the year.

46. Slovenia, which had actively participated in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Negotiation of a Convention against Corruption, welcomed the fact that work had been concluded on the first universal international instrument on corruption, to be signed by the end of 2003 in Mérida, Mexico, upon adoption by the General Assembly. Noting the lack of a definition of corruption, including in the new international instrument, she reaffirmed her delegation's view that corruption needed to be understood in a wider sense. In other words, in addition to criminal acts, it should also encompass minor acts of corruption, breaches of codes of ethics and misconduct in public office. The inclusion in a binding international instrument of provisions regarding the recovery of assets of illicit origin was a novelty which her delegation strongly welcomed. However, the Conference of States Parties still needed to determine the implementation mechanism of the Convention, a task which was likely to be difficult given different cultural, political and developmental perceptions of the phenomenon. She reaffirmed Slovenia's intention to sign the Convention.

47. **Mr. Gansukh** (Mongolia) said that the recent entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime demonstrated the strong will of the international community to combat that scourge. His delegation supported the goals and principles of the Convention and its worldwide implementation. Expressing appreciation to UNODC for providing technical assistance to various Member States, including Mongolia, he announced that his country was taking steps to prepare and adapt its national legislation in order to be able to incorporate the Convention. In July, the Government of Mongolia and UNODC had signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of drug control and crime prevention. UNODC had assisted Mongolia in the preparation of a national seminar for policymakers, investigators and prosecutors, focusing on the ratification and implementation of the Convention. His Government wished to cooperate further with UNODC in the effective implementation of the provisions of the Memorandum.

48. His delegation welcomed the consensus reached in finalizing the text of the draft United Nations Convention against Corruption and was confident that the Convention would be adopted at the current session of the General Assembly. The Mongolian Government, which attached particular importance to anti-corruption measures, had adopted a series of anti-corruption measures over the past year, including the establishment of a National Council and the adoption of a National Programme to Combat Corruption. In March 2003 a National Anti-Corruption Conference had been organized in cooperation with the UNDP office in his country. A national law against corruption was currently being drawn up. The topic had been actively and widely discussed by the executive, judiciary, civil society, the private sector and the media.

49. Since corruption was a complex social, political and economic phenomenon, the exchange of experiences, partnership and cooperation at both national and international levels were of particular importance in combating it. In that regard, he noted that the importance of combating corruption had been highlighted in the Declaration adopted at the fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies held the previous month in Ulaanbaatar. In implementing the Ulaanbaatar Declaration and Plan of Action: Democracy, Good Governance and Civil

Society, there was a need to include measures to root out corruption, which constituted a major threat to democracy. The Government of Mongolia would continue to participate actively in the international fight against the threats of transnational crime, corruption and drug trafficking, as well as in the international fight against terrorism.

50. **Mr. Kazykhanov** (Kazakhstan), speaking on behalf of the countries forming part of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), namely, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, said that, owing to its magnitude and its links to terrorism, arms trafficking, transnational organized crime and money-laundering, the drug problem had become one of the main challenges facing the civilized world. The United Nations and its specialized agencies had effectively coordinated the fight against drugs and must continue to play a significant role in that area because, in spite of increased regional and international cooperation, much still remained to be done.

51. In view of the fact that the illicit drugs trade was one of the main sources of financing for terrorism, CIS strongly supported the Secretary-General's efforts to enhance the role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and praised the Office for its work in implementing the decisions adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly and the recommendations of the Joint Ministerial Statement adopted in April 2003 in Vienna. In that connection, he also drew attention to the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

52. Regional cooperation was one of the most effective mechanisms for eradicating the illicit drugs trade, and the CIS countries were in the process of adopting political, legislative and socio-economic measures to coordinate their activities in that area. They also held annual meetings to develop common policies to combat drugs rings operating in the region.

53. The situation in Afghanistan was extremely concerning. Despite the efforts of the Government and the international community, the country remained one of the main exporters of drugs, and production levels continued to increase, representing a threat not only to the region but also to the world as a whole. The country must regain a sense of normalcy, its terrible humanitarian situation must be addressed and alternative-development measures must be implemented. More effective measures to combat the drug problem were therefore required, which should be coordinated by UNODC.

54. The strengthening of economic links and porous borders within CIS had turned its members into transit countries for drug trafficking. Owing to the material and technical difficulties of protecting a number of border zones in the region, almost 65 per cent of drugs from Afghanistan bound for Europe passed through the CIS States. Drug trafficking and consumption were still on the increase, posing a risk to both public health and the socio-political climate in the region. In recent years, the Governments of the States concerned had taken steps to improve drug control by implementing measures focusing on the prevention of drug abuse, rehabilitation for addicts and anti-trafficking mechanisms. However, the increase in drug-related HIV/AIDS infections had become a cause for serious concern.

55. In order to combat those threats effectively, the international community must employ an integrated and global approach which should be coordinated by the United Nations agencies and programmes. CIS strongly supported the work of UNODC, in particular its adoption of the regional action programme to enhance cooperation in the area of drug control between States bordering on Afghanistan, the so-called "security belt". Lastly, he reaffirmed the commitment and willingness of CIS to pursuing optimum cooperation with the United Nations and among all Member States in order to eradicate completely the scourge of drugs, which posed a real threat to the future of mankind.

56. **Mr. Alimov** (Tajikistan) endorsed the statement made by the representative of Kazakhstan and stressed the historical significance of multilateralism in solving some of the most difficult problems of the twentieth century. Only international solidarity would lead to the eradication of the illicit drugs trade, a problem that affected all central Asian States, particularly Tajikistan, which was located at the crossroads of the great "opium trail" that began in Afghanistan, the world's largest opium producer. In spite of the efforts deployed in Afghanistan, the Taliban's trade infrastructure had remained intact and the heroin laboratories had simply relocated to the mountains. The number of laboratories had increased and revenue from the drugs trade had reached US$ 2.5 billion.

57. The drugs trade in Afghanistan was closely linked to the financing of international terrorism. The fight against drugs was one of the priorities of the Government of Tajikistan, which every year enhanced cooperation within the framework of CIS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the collective security mechanism and UNODC. Tajikistan, as a transit country, had been one of the States most affected by the consequences of the illicit drugs trade, but it had also had considerable success in combating it, thereby winning the confidence of the international community: In 2002, it had been ranked fourth in the world in terms of the number of heroin seizures and third in terms of the destruction of crops. With the support of the Russian Federation's border-control services, the Tajik authorities had managed to confiscate over 30 tons of opiates, including 20 tons of heroin, in the space of nine months. During his visit to the country the previous year, the Secretary-General of the United Nations had been able to observe the high levels of dedication and professionalism demonstrated by the drug-control services established in Dushanbe with the assistance of the international community. Currently, 80 per cent of the opium and heroin seizures in central Asia, and almost 70 per cent of those in CIS States, took place in Tajikistan. Cooperation between the Russian Federation and Tajikistan had made it possible to carry out those seizures, but donor countries and UNODC must also be credited for their technical and financial assistance. He recalled the proposal submitted to the General Assembly by the President of Tajikistan relating to the establishment of a broad anti-drug coalition, coordinated by the Secretary-General through the intermediary of UNODC.

58. The tragedy unfolding in Afghanistan showed that half-hearted measures never yielded results. The extreme poverty afflicting the country provided a fertile breeding ground for the illicit drugs trade, and the international community must help the Afghan President to create the stability needed not only for the well-being of Afghanistan itself but also for the good of the whole world.

59. **Mr. Srisodapol** (Thailand) said that the intrinsic linkage between illicit drug production and trafficking and transnational organized crime was well known, especially trafficking in persons and arms, together with people smuggling and terrorism. Their close links with corruption and money-laundering had greatly threatened good governance and democracy, with a profound impact on the societies and economies of the affected countries. His country therefore reaffirmed its strong commitment to fighting against the scourge of drugs.

60. His country considered the question of drugs as having top priority in its national agenda. At the beginning of the year, the Prime Minister had declared a war on drugs in a nationwide campaign; the public and private sectors as well as civil society and local communities had been mobilized to participate in the drug eradication campaign. A holistic approach to the fight against drugs had been adopted, addressing both the demand and supply sides. As poverty was the root cause of the drug problem, the government had placed emphasis on poverty eradication. Drug suppression had been incorporated as a priority in the national economic and social development plan. While drug addicts were treated as patients and took part in rehabilitation and care programmes, drug traffickers were prosecuted. The new legislation facilitated the confiscation of assets and property acquired in relation to drugs, and that had greatly contributed to the success of the operation.

61. His delegation shared the view expressed by the Executive Director that participation was the key to success in the eradication of drugs and crimes. Every country and all sectors of society shared responsibility to counter the scourge of drugs and transnational crime. With that in mind, his country had recently increased its contribution to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime by US$ 30,000. It had also played an active role in forging partnerships with countries both in the region and beyond it for developing their own model of sustainable alternative development as an effective means of combating drugs. His country's experience in that connection, through the initiatives of the King, had been applied to the Yong Kha project in the Shan state of Myanmar. Assistance was also being extended to help Afghanistan in its efforts to eradicate opium. In July 2003, several members of the Afghan Cabinet had visited the Doi Tung Development Project in Chiang Rai. The Doi Tung development project had also been exhibited at the Vienna International Centre during the forty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

62. His Government was grateful for the visit of the Executive Director to a number of countries in that region, and had appreciated his remarks concerning the

positive and very encouraging developments in the Golden Triangle. The UNODC Regional Office in Bangkok had promoted international drug control in the region. Another example of regional cooperation had been the ministerial meeting of signatories to the memorandum of understanding on drug control (China, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), held in Hanoi, together with the continuing support of the Office for the subregional action plan.

63. Despite the positive trend, there was a need to stop and if possible eliminate the increasing threat of the spread of amphetamine-type stimulants and other synthetic drugs, particularly among young people. In that connection, the expansion of the regional drug-control cooperation framework among Thailand, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar to include India, as proposed by the Prime Minister of Thailand, had underlined the unwavering commitment of countries in the region to further strengthening regional drug-control efforts. The Chiang Rai Declaration, adopted at the ministerial meeting of the five countries, was aimed at promoting partnership and strengthening drug-control cooperation, especially in the control of the precursor chemicals and at adopting Thailand's initiative on alternative development as a means to comprehensively address the regional drug problem.

64. The Government of Thailand had paid particular attention to the border areas where illicit activities were more prominent. Within the framework of the holistic approach, the Government had adopted various measures to promote social and economic development and the well-being of the people along the border areas as a long-term solution to the drug and crime problems. The initiative of the Prime Minister to develop an economic-cooperation strategy with Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar had contributed to the creation of an enabling environment for sustainable social and economic development in the region. That strategy, which had been supported by strong political commitment at the highest level, had been launched precisely to tackle illicit cross-border activities, including drug production and trafficking with the aim of promoting the sustainable economic development and well-being of the people in the border areas.

65. Turning to the subject of transnational crime, he said that Thailand welcomed the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the forthcoming signing in Mexico of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. His Government regarded the fight against corruption, the trafficking in human beings, people smuggling and illicit trafficking of arms to be of high priority in the national programme. A structural reform was being undertaken to promote good governance and transparency. The new national mechanism to suppress corruption, the National Counter-Corruption Commission, had been established with the primary task of ensuring corruption-free government. That effort had been strengthened by the anti-money-laundering law and the creating of the Anti-Money-Laundering Office as its implementing agency. The special investigation department under the Ministry of Justice had been further strengthened to upgrade Thailand's capacity to counter crimes, including those of a transnational nature.

66. At the regional level, a bilateral memorandum of understanding had been concluded with Cambodia for eliminating trafficking in children and women and assisting the victims of trafficking. The bilateral memorandum of understanding with the Lao People's Democratic Republic on employment cooperation would also help illegal migrant workers from falling prey to transnational criminals. Thailand had actively participated in the ASEAN Working Group on Transnational Crimes. In the framework of the Bali process, Thailand had again been chosen as the coordinator of the ad hoc expert group on policies, legislative frameworks and law enforcement, which had successfully developed model legislation to assist the countries of the region in criminalizing human trafficking. As the host of the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in April 2005, Thailand, in close cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, had been working on preparations for the Congress. The theme of the Congress, "Synergies and responses: strategic alliances in crime prevention and criminal justice" would further strengthen the global alliance for the effective fight against the new manifestations of crime in the twenty-first century.

67. **Mr. Rivas Zubiría** (Colombia) endorsed the statements made by the Rio Group and the Andean Community concerning drugs. He thanked the

Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for his statement in which he had reported that news from Colombia concerning the fight against drugs was encouraging. Colombia had been one of the countries most affected by the violence and terrorism generated by the global problem of drugs. The toll in terms of human, economic, social and political sacrifice had been incalculable. The challenges posed by the drug problem required collective, innovative and bold action in line with the principle of shared responsibility.

68. Given the growth and diversification of demand, the fight against drugs called for decisive action by countries that had a high level of illicit drug consumption and were located in regions where chemical precursors and small and light arms were produced, and money-laundering benefited from lax financial and banking controls. The Administration of the President of Colombia had made the task of eliminating the country's drug problem a priority, as it was the driving force behind the violence and terrorism in Colombia. International cooperation was therefore fundamental, including parallel measures for the exchange of judicial information with a view to crime prevention and law enforcement.

69. Colombia had produced impressive results in its fight against drugs, Between August 2002 and July 2003, it had eliminated 150,282 hectares of coca crops and 3,176 hectares of opium poppy crops, with an estimated 83 per cent efficiency, representing an increase of 38.46 per cent over the previous year. In 2002, 120.5 tons of coca derivatives had been seized, representing an increase of 61 per cent over the previous year, while 1,448 laboratories for processing drugs and chemical substances had been destroyed. The same year, two laws had been passed on the administration of confiscated property and on the nullification of ownership rights of properties belonging to drug traffickers. So far, 5,600 hectares had been expropriated and would be redistributed under agrarian reform.

70. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, as at 31 July 2003 there had been 69,000 hectares of coca crops in the country, representing a 32 per cent reduction on the 102,000 hectares that had existed at the end of the previous year. In seven months, coca crops had therefore fallen by one third. The goal of a 50 per cent reduction by the end of the year would only be reached if farmers growing illicit crops were given other economic options through alternative-development projects or the forest-ranger programme, improved security and agrarian reform.

71. Colombia spent 1.48 per cent of its gross domestic product on efforts to combat criminal organizations, destroy their illegal factories, limit the effects of their criminal activity, intercept drug routes and strengthen the judicial and prison system. In exchange, the Government hoped that all nations would play their part in a task which, as had been pointed out, could not be carried out by only one or a few nations, but required the participation of the entire international community. In order to effectively contain money-laundering, in 1999 his Government had set up the Information and Financial Analysis Unit, which was an effective model for collecting, organizing and analysing information about drugs. The transnational nature of money-laundering required coordinated and effective action to be taken by similar bodies in other States.

72. In order to reduce drug consumption, reinforce prevention and improve the rehabilitation, social reintegration and re-employment of drug users, his Government had asked the Ministry of Social Welfare to develop an integrated drug-demand-reduction policy at the national level. To that end, 12 centres providing comprehensive service for drug addicts had been set up in Colombia's main cities.

73. In line with the principle of shared responsibility, Colombia urged the international community to make a real commitment to simultaneously combating all the components of the problem of illicit drugs. In that regard, the international community should bear in mind the initiatives taken by the affected countries themselves. Until a system was introduced to evaluate results and thereby identify weak or vulnerable areas, each country should reflect on what was needed in terms of international cooperation. Given that there was now a symbiotic relationship between the problem of illicit drugs and terrorism, the two issues must be tackled simultaneously. Colombia reiterated the need to freeze and confiscate money that terrorists and transnational organized criminal groups kept in the main international financial markets, as a way of contributing effectively to stable and strong democracy and regional security.

Mr. Martens (Belgium) took the Chair.

74. **Ms. Yan** Jiarong (China) said that, in the five years since the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, which had established clear goals and targets for international drug control, considerable progress had been made owing to the combined efforts of Governments and the international community. However, the global drug situation remained very serious. While the danger of traditional drugs such as heroin had still not been eliminated, new types of drugs such as amphetamine-type stimulants were gradually becoming rampant. There were frequent cases of chemicals that could be easily used to manufacture drugs getting into illicit channels. Drug-related crimes were closely intertwined with transnational organized crimes, such as terrorism, money-laundering and trafficking in persons. HIV/AIDS infection as a result of drug abuse had become an increasingly prominent phenomenon. The developing countries were still hindered by inadequate resources for drug control. Therefore, international drug control remained an arduous and difficult task. Her delegation welcomed the concrete measures put forward by the Ministerial Segment of the forty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on the further implementation of the Action Plan adopted by the special session of the General Assembly. Those measures had important guiding significance and China hoped that they would be implemented effectively by the international community.

75. China, whose people had suffered deeply from drugs in modern history, had always advocated comprehensive drug control. The Government had formulated an integrated and balanced national drug control strategy, steadily improving drug control laws and regulations and cracking down on the crimes of drug manufacturing and trafficking. Meanwhile, various government departments and society as a whole had been mobilized to participate in drug control efforts, and tangible results had been achieved. Her Government believed that the national drug control strategy should focus on drug demand reduction. In recent years, it had carried out nationwide campaigns on prevention, education, detoxification and rehabilitation, focusing on high-risk groups such as young people and the unemployed, and had launched initiatives to establish drug-free communities. Such efforts had achieved encouraging results. China participated in activities relating to international and regional cooperation on drug control, and was committed to its international responsibility in that area. China believed that, while alternative development was an important link in the international strategy for integrated drug control, the key lay in market access for alternative development products. Since 2000, her Government had given preferential treatment to alternative development products, the exempted customs duty for which amounted to $2.4 million per year.

76. The drug problem was a global challenge and solving it therefore required global cooperation. China commended the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in coordinating global drug control and assisting various countries and regions in drug control cooperation. At a time when the drug problem in Afghanistan was a matter of concern, China supported the efforts of the United Nations to assist Afghanistan in implementing its drug control strategy and vigorously developing its alternative economy. China appealed to donors and international organizations to give further assistance to developing countries so that they could enhance their capacity-building in the areas of drug demand reduction, drug control, enforcement and alternative development. Such action should be taken with a sense of historical responsibility and urgency, and in accordance with the principles of shared responsibility, equality and mutual benefit, and non-politicization. China was confident that, with the genuine cooperation and combined efforts of the international community, the international cause of drug control would have a bright future.

77. **Mr. Iskandarov** (Azerbaijan) said that transnational crime was a threat to the whole system of global security and development, as it affected all nations irrespective of their proximity or relationship to the place of origin of a particular criminal activity. The fight against crime and drugs was a shared responsibility which required an integrated and balanced approach between supply and demand reduction, as well as a comprehensive strategy combining alternative development, poverty eradication, law enforcement, treatment, rehabilitation and education.

78. Azerbaijan took very seriously the threats posed by organized crime and its worst manifestations — international terrorism and international narcotics production — and considered fighting such evils and cooperating with the international community to be among its priorities. Azerbaijan was a party to the main international conventions in the field, including the

United Nations Conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988 and the recently ratified United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and two of its additional protocols, as well as the main international conventions on fighting different forms of international terrorism. It had also actively cooperated with the international community, including the Security Council's sanctions committees. In order to prevent international criminals from escaping justice, in 2001 Azerbaijan had adopted an extradition law based on the principle of *aut dedere, aut judicare* which required perpetrators of international crimes, in particular terrorism, to be either punished in the country concerned or extradited to another. It had also established a broad network of bilateral agreements on mutual judicial assistance and even cooperated with those countries with which it had not yet signed agreements.

79. Another global problem closely related to organized crime was drug consumption. In 1996, Azerbaijan had set up a special State Commission to fight drugs and, in 1999, it had adopted a law on the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors, which provided the legal framework for drug control activities. At the same time, Azerbaijan was tackling drug distribution in the country on various fronts, combining preventative measures with law enforcement activities.

80. It was unfortunate that unresolved political and territorial disputes continued to hinder the fight against international crime and drug trafficking. Azerbaijan continued to receive alarming signals that 20 per cent of its territory, currently under the occupation of the armed forces of Armenia, was being used for drug trafficking and as a safe haven for international criminals. Armenian aggression against a sovereign State had become possible, to a certain extent, owing to the assistance received by Armenia from various criminal groups, including international terrorist organizations. The illegal occupation of a portion of the southern Azerbaijani border, which was located on the drug trafficking route between south-east Asia and Europe, should also alarm countries on the demand side of such transnational criminal businesses. Therefore, international commitments to preserve the territorial integrity of Member States and prevent aggressive separatism and militant nationalism were among core activities and contributed to the global fight against drug production and trafficking.

81. Azerbaijan had been fighting illicit drug circulation since the collapse of the Soviet Union, but did not have sufficient capacity to deal with the threat posed. It was therefore in urgent need of international expertise and assistance in the areas of consultation on legal matters and coordination with other countries in the region. Azerbaijan highly valued the work of the United Nations agencies working in the field, particularly the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and was ready to contribute to further cooperation. Baku was preparing to host the fifth meeting of the members of the Memorandum of Understanding on Subregional Drug Control Cooperation. In the light of the above, his Government once again invited the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to open its regional office in the Azerbaijani capital, an ideal choice given the geographical location and regional ties of Azerbaijan.

82. **Mr. Gappoev** (Russian Federation) said that crime was one of the most serious and pressing obstacles to progress towards a prosperous and democratic world and that the work of the United Nations in the area of crime prevention must be strengthened. The Organization must continue to play a coordinating role and pursue the best possible practical results in collaboration with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

83. His delegation welcomed the successful conclusion of the preparatory work for an international convention against corruption and took the view that that instrument should contribute to the achievement of important objectives, such as the efficient functioning of States, transparency in the adoption of major decisions and the promotion of confidence in the authorities and the business sector. The significance of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols could not be underestimated. Those instruments should be ratified by a greater number of States.

84. Drug trafficking posed another huge threat, particularly to young people, and all Member States had a responsibility to implement fully the decisions adopted at the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. The Government of the Russian Federation had continued its work in that area, including the adoption of guiding principles for the fight against drugs and drug addiction, the ongoing work of the Governmental Commission on drug abuse and trafficking and the establishment of the Governmental

Committee for the control of trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

85. Afghanistan remained one of the main focal points for drug trafficking, and the United Nations must implement a strategy to remedy the situation, restore the agricultural sector and integrate the country into the global community. That must be done within the framework of the provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions and the 2003 Paris Conference. He praised the work of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, which was in need of alternative sources of funding, such as non-governmental organizations and the international financial institutions.

86. The close and dynamic link between crime, terrorism and drug trafficking must not be forgotten: the international community could not allow those three phenomena to continue reinforcing one another and gaining the upper hand. In the context of the fight against crime and drug trafficking, the Russian Federation attached great importance to regional cooperation within the framework of CIS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the collective security mechanism. In that connection, he reiterated his delegation's support for the statements made by the representatives of Kazakhstan and Belarus on behalf of the members of CIS.

87. **Mr. Chedid** (Lebanon), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation had not been surprised by the statement made by the representative of Israel, in which Hezbollah had been labelled a terrorist organization and accused of financing its activities through drug trafficking. All delegations were accustomed to hearing such baseless accusations from Israel, a country that consistently engaged in State terrorism, widely recognized as the worst form of terrorism. Hezbollah was not a terrorist organization but rather a resistance movement that, together with other Lebanese resistance groups, had forced Israel to withdraw from areas of Lebanon it had occupied for 22 years. During the occupation, Israel had promoted the cultivation and trafficking of drugs in order to arm and finance the South Lebanese Army, which, at that time, supported the occupying Power. In contrast, as acknowledged by international institutions, Lebanon was fighting to eradicate illicit cultivation and introduce alternative crops.

88. His delegation rejected the accusations made by Israel and reaffirmed that southern Lebanon was totally controlled by the State security forces and mixed patrols. Inhabitants who had returned after the end of the Israeli occupation would be living in peace if it were not for the daily incursions of the Israeli army and air force. Israel was acting illegally by its continued occupation of parts of southern Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Golan and the Palestinian Territory. As usual, Israel was seeking to politicize the issue of drugs, unlike all the other delegations that had tried to address it objectively and from a technical perspective. Normalcy had returned to Lebanon, which was cooperating with international institutions in order to put an end to the threat posed by drugs.

89. **Ms. Kalay-Kleitman** (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, expressed her regret that the representative of Lebanon had used such an important social issue as a pretext for launching a political attack against Israel. The issues raised by her delegation — more specifically the relationship between drug trafficking by Hezbollah and terrorist operations financed by it — should come as no surprise. Lebanon was harbouring a terrorist organization and allowing it to pursue terrorist activities unhindered from its soil. Those activities, directed against Israeli citizens across the border, were causing wanton and malicious loss of life and destruction of property and compelling the Israeli State to take action in defence of its citizens. Hezbollah was pursuing its terrorist agenda by all possible means and was financing its activities through drug trafficking and smuggling. She recalled that the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime had drawn attention to the links between drug trafficking and terrorism and stated his intention to devote more attention to that issue, including dedicating a high-level segment to the topic the following year. She welcomed that decision and trusted the Office would not overlook the activities of Hezbollah in the region. She regretted the deliberate politicization of the agenda item by the Lebanese delegation and reminded Member States that Israel had complied fully with the provisions of Security Council resolution 425 (1978) by fully withdrawing its forces from Lebanese territory. In contrast, Lebanon had failed to fulfil its obligations under the resolution because, by allowing a terrorist organization engaged in drug trafficking, such as Hezbollah, to operate freely from its soil, it had not taken effective control of its own territory.

90. **Mr. Chedid** (Lebanon) took the view that Israel had politicized the issue by accusing a Lebanese resistance party of terrorism. He rejected the assertion that Lebanon was harbouring terrorist organizations: Hezbollah had not taken refuge in Lebanon, since it belonged to the Lebanese people. Lebanon reaffirmed its willingness to cooperate fully with international organizations in order to put an end to the scourge of drugs and was proud of its achievements in that regard.

91. **The Chairman** informed the Committee of the Bureau's proposal to adjourn meetings at 4.30 p.m. during Ramadan.

92. *It was so decided.*

93. **Ms. Astanah Banu** (Malaysia) thanked the Bureau for the decision it had taken in response to her request. That decision was an example of the dialogue between civilizations that could be extended to other holidays.

94. **Ms. Al Haj Ali** (Syrian Arab Republic) endorsed the statement made by the representative of Malaysia.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.